

REMARKS

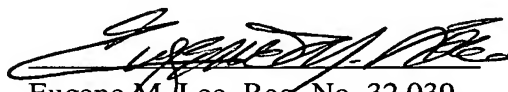
Prior to entry of this preliminary amendment, claims 1-41 are pending in the subject application. Claims 1 and 18 are independent. By the instant amendment, claim 1 is amended and new claims 42-48 are added. New claims 42 and 46 are independent. The specification is amended to maintain consistency with the claims as amended. No new matter is added by the instant amendment.

Claims 1-48 are presented to the Examiner for an initial action on the merits.

An early and favorable action on the merits is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: August 19, 2004


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PETITION and
DEPOSIT ACCOUNT CHARGE AUTHORIZATION

This document and any concurrently filed papers are believed to be timely. Should any extension of the term be required, applicant hereby petitions the Director for such extension and requests that any applicable petition fee be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1645.

If fee payment is enclosed, this amount is believed to be correct. However, the Director is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-1645.

Any additional fee(s) necessary to effect the proper and timely filing of the accompanying-papers may also be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1645.